

“significantly” to public understanding of government operations or activities. The public’s understanding of the subject in question, as compared to the level of public understanding existing prior to the disclosure, must be enhanced by the disclosure to a significant extent. OSC shall not make value judgments about whether information that would contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government is “important” enough to be made public.

(3) To determine whether the second fee waiver requirement is met, OSC will consider the following factors:

(i) The existence and magnitude of a commercial interest: Whether the requester has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. OSC shall consider any commercial interest of the requester (with reference to the definition of “commercial use” in paragraph (b)(1) of this section), or of any person on whose behalf the requester may be acting, that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. Requesters shall be given an opportunity to provide explanatory information about this consideration.

(ii) The primary interest in disclosure: Whether any identified commercial interest of the requester is sufficiently large, in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that disclosure is “primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” A fee waiver or reduction is justified where the public interest standard is satisfied and that public interest is greater in magnitude than that of any identified commercial interest in disclosure. OSC ordinarily shall presume that where a news media requester has satisfied the public interest standard, the public interest will be the interest primarily served by disclosure to that requester. Disclosure to data brokers or others who merely compile and market government information for direct economic return shall not be presumed to primarily serve the public interest.

(4) Where only some of the records to be released satisfy the requirements for a waiver of fees, a waiver shall be granted for those records.

(5) Requests for the waiver or reduction of fees should address the factors

listed in paragraphs (k)(2) and (3) of this section, insofar as they apply to each request. OSC will exercise its discretion to consider the cost-effectiveness of its investment of administrative resources in this decision making process, however, in deciding to grant waivers or reductions of fees.

§ 1820.8 Business information.

(a) *In general.* Business information obtained by OSC from a submitter will be disclosed under the FOIA only under this section.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) “Business information” means commercial or financial information obtained by OSC from a submitter that may be protected from disclosure under exemption 4 of the FOIA.

(2) “Submitter” means any person or entity from whom the OSC obtains business information, directly or indirectly. The term includes corporations, and state, local, tribal and foreign governments.

(c) *Designation of business information.* A submitter of business information will use good-faith efforts to designate, by appropriate markings, either at the time of submission or at a reasonable time thereafter, any portion of its submission that it considers to be protected from disclosure under exemption 4. These designations will expire 10 years after the date of the submission unless the submitter requests, and provides justification for, a longer designation period.

(d) *Notice to submitters.* OSC shall provide a submitter with prompt written notice of a FOIA request or administrative appeal that seeks its business information wherever required under paragraph (e) of this section, except as provided in paragraph (h) of this section, in order to give the submitter an opportunity to object to disclosure of any specified portion of that information under paragraph (f) of this section. The notice shall either describe the business information requested or include copies of the requested records or record portions containing the information. When notification of a voluminous number of submitters is required, notification may be made by posting or

publishing the notice in a place reasonably likely to accomplish it.

(e) *When notice is required.* Notice shall be given to a submitter wherever:

(1) The information has been designated in good faith by the submitter as information considered protected from disclosure under exemption 4; or

(2) OSC has reason to believe that the information may be protected from disclosure under exemption 4.

(f) *Opportunity to object to disclosure.* OSC will allow a submitter a reasonable time to respond to the notice described in paragraph (d) of this section and will specify that time period within the notice. If a submitter has any objection to disclosure, it is required to submit a detailed written statement. The statement must specify all grounds for withholding any portion of the information under any exemption of the FOIA and, in the case of exemption 4, it must show why the information is a trade secret or commercial or financial information that is privileged or confidential. If a submitter fails to respond to the notice within the time specified in it, the submitter will be considered to have no objection to disclosure of the information. Information provided by the submitter that is not received by OSC until after its disclosure decision has been made shall not be considered by OSC. Information provided by a submitter under this paragraph may itself be subject to disclosure under the FOIA.

(g) *Notice of intent to disclose.* OSC shall consider a submitter's objections and specific grounds for nondisclosure in deciding whether to disclose business information. Whenever OSC decides to disclose business information over the objection of a submitter, OSC shall give the submitter written notice, which shall include:

(1) A statement of the reason(s) why each of the submitter's disclosure objections was not sustained;

(2) A description of the business information to be disclosed; and

(3) A specified disclosure date, which shall be a reasonable time subsequent to the notice.

(h) *Exceptions to notice requirements.* The notice requirements of paragraphs (d) and (g) of this section shall not apply if:

(1) OSC determines that the information should not be disclosed;

(2) The information lawfully has been published or has been officially made available to the public;

(3) Disclosure of the information is required by statute (other than the FOIA) or by a regulation issued in accordance with the requirements of Executive Order 12600; or

(4) The designation made by the submitter under paragraph (c) of this section appears obviously frivolous - except that, in such a case, OSC shall, within a reasonable time prior to a specified disclosure date, give the submitter written notice of any final decision to disclose the information.

(i) *Notice of FOIA lawsuit.* Whenever a requester files a lawsuit seeking to compel the disclosure of business information, OSC shall promptly notify the submitter.

(j) *Corresponding notice to requesters.* Whenever OSC provides a submitter with notice and an opportunity to object to disclosure under paragraph (d) of this section, OSC shall also notify the requester(s). Whenever OSC notifies a submitter of its intent to disclose requested information under paragraph (g) of this section, OSC shall also notify the requester(s). Whenever a submitter files a lawsuit seeking to prevent the disclosure of business information, OSC shall notify the requester(s).

§ 1820.9 Other rights and services.

Nothing in this part shall be construed to entitle any person, as of right, to any service or to the disclosure of any record to which such person is not entitled under the FOIA.

§ 1820.10 Production of official records or testimony in legal proceedings.

No employee or former employee of the Office of Special Counsel shall, in response to a demand of a court or other authority, produce or disclose any information or records acquired as part of the performance of his official duties or because of his official status without the prior approval of the Special Counsel or the Special Counsel's duly authorized designee.